

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend claims 1, 6, 11, 14, 16, and 19, cancel claims 34-37, and add claims 38-41 as follows. Following is a complete listing of the claims pending in the application, as amended:

1. (Currently amended) A method in a computer system for providing computer equipment to a customer, comprising:

updating a database to indicate a lease of at least one computer component from a component vendor, the lease providing for an assembler to receive the at least one leased computer component from the vendor and pay the vendor a periodic vendor payment;

receiving an indication of an available piece of the computer equipment that is assembled by the assembler with the at least one leased computer component;

updating the database to indicate a lease of the assembled computer equipment from the assembler to the customer in return for a payment from the customer corresponding at least in part to a length of time the customer leases the computer equipment;

receiving an indication from the customer that the lease of the assembled computer equipment is voluntarily terminated after an arbitrary, customer-selected time period has elapsed, without incurring a penalty to the customer; and

updating the database to indicate that the computer equipment is received back from the customer; and

ceasing to pay the vendor the periodic vendor payment in response to the computer equipment being received back from the customer.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein the customer is a first customer and the payment is a first customer payment, and wherein the method further comprises updating the database to indicate sale of the computer equipment to a second customer, or lease of the computer equipment to the second customer by providing the computer equipment to the second customer and receiving a second customer payment corresponding at least in part to the length of time the second customer leases the computer equipment.

3. (Previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

indicating a commitment to leasing a selected number of computer components from the component vendor,

wherein the periodic vendor payment corresponds to the cost of the computer component multiplied by an interest rate factor and divided by a total number of predetermined intervals that elapse until the estimated value of the component is zero; and

updating the database to indicate payment of the periodic vendor payment after the total number of predetermined intervals has elapsed.

4. (Original) The method of claim 3, further comprising updating the database to indicate purchasing the at least one component from the vendor and selling or leasing the computer equipment to another customer by providing the computer equipment to the another customer and receiving payments from the another customer while continuing to pay the vendor the periodic vendor payment.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein

the periodic vendor payment corresponds to the cost of the at least one component multiplied by an interest rate factor and divided by a number of time intervals that elapse until an estimated value of the at least one component is zero; and wherein the method further comprises

indicating purchasing the at least one component from the vendor for a purchase amount after a selected number of time intervals have passed and after paying a selected number of periodic vendor payments, the purchase amount corresponding to a remaining value of the at least one component.

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein

~~the periodic vendor payment corresponds to the cost of the at least one component multiplied by an interest rate factor and divided by a number of time intervals that elapse until the value of the at least one component is zero; and wherein the method further comprises~~

indicating selling or leasing the computer equipment to another customer; and continuing
resuming to lease the at least one components and pay the vendor the periodic vendor
payment to the vendor for the leased at least one component in response to selling
or leasing the computer equipment to the other customer~~after the number of time~~
~~intervals has passed.~~

7. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein updating a database to indicate a lease of the computer equipment includes indicating receipt from the customer of a plurality of periodic payments having equal values.

8. (Original) The method of claim 1 wherein updating a database to indicate a lease of the computer equipment includes indicating receipt from the customer a plurality of periodic payments with each successive payment being less than the preceding payment.

9. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:
indicating refurbishing of at least one component of the computer equipment after
receiving the computer equipment back from the customer; and
indicating transmission of the computer equipment with the refurbished at least one
component to another customer.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising indicating payment of an interest fee for at least one computer component.

11. (Currently amended) A method for providing computer equipment to a customer, comprising:

leasing at least one component of the computer equipment from a vendor by receiving the
leased component from the vendor without paying the vendor a full value of the
leased component;

paying the vendor a number of periodic vendor payments, each of the periodic vendor
payments being less than the full value of the leased component;

installing the leased at least one component in the computer equipment; and
leasing the computer equipment having the leased at least one component installed to a
customer in return for payment from the customer corresponding at least in part to
the length of time the customer leases the computer equipment;
continuing to pay the vendor the periodic vendor payments as long as the computer
equipment containing the leased at least one component is leased to the customer;
and
ceasing to pay the vendor for the leased at least one component in response to the
customer terminating the customer's lease of the computer equipment.

12. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein the customer is a first customer and
the payment is a first customer payment, and wherein the method further comprises selling the
computer equipment to a second customer, or leasing the computer equipment to the second
customer by providing the computer equipment to the second customer and receiving a second
customer payment corresponding at least in part to the length of time the second customer leases
the computer equipment.

13. (Previously presented) The method of claim 11, further comprising:
receiving an indication from the customer that the computer equipment lease is
terminated after an arbitrary, customer-selected time period has elapsed, without
incurring a penalty to the customer; and
receiving the computer equipment of the terminated lease back from the customer.

14. (Currently amended) The method of claim 13, further comprising:
ceasing to receive payment from the customer upon termination of the computer
equipment lease; and
wherein ceasing to pay the vendor includes ceasing to pay the vendor for the at least one
computer component installed in the returned computer equipment ~~after~~ in
response to ceasing to receive the payment from the customer ceases.

15. (Original) The method of claim 11 wherein installing the component in the computer equipment includes installing the at least one component in a personal computer, notebook computer or server.

16. (Currently amended) A method in a computer system for providing computer equipment to a customer, comprising:

updating a database to indicate that at least one component of the computer equipment is leased from a vendor, the lease including receiving the at least one component from the vendor, installing the leased at least one component in the computer equipment, and paying the vendor a periodic vendor payment;

receiving an indication that the leased at least one component is installed in the computer equipment;

updating a database to indicate that the computer equipment is leased to a customer in return for a payment from the customer corresponding at least in part to a length of time the customer leases the computer equipment; and

updating a database to indicate that the computer equipment is received back from the customer and the lease with the customer is voluntarily terminated after an arbitrary, customer-selected period of time has elapsed without penalty to the customer; and

updating a database to indicate ceasing to pay the vendor the periodic vendor payment in response to receiving the computer equipment back from the customer.

17. (Previously presented) The method of claim 16, further comprising updating a database to indicate continued payments to the vendor for the component after having paid the vendor a total amount for the component that is at least equal to a full value of the component, while leasing the computer equipment to the customer or another customer.

18. (Original) The method of claim 16 wherein the customer is a first customer and the payment is a first customer payment, and wherein the method further comprises updating a database to indicate a sale of the computer equipment to a second customer, or a lease of the computer equipment to the second customer by providing the computer equipment to the second

customer and receiving a second customer payment corresponding at least in part to the length of time the second customer leases the computer equipment.

19. (Currently amended) A method for providing computer equipment to customers, comprising:

leasing at least one component of the computer equipment from a vendor by receiving the at least one component from the vendor and paying the vendor a periodic vendor payment;

assembling the computer equipment by installing the leased at least one component into the computer equipment;

leasing the assembled computer equipment to a first customer by providing the computer equipment to the first customer and receiving a first customer payment corresponding at least in part to a length of time the computer equipment is leased by the first customer;

receiving the leased computer equipment back from the first customer after an arbitrary customer-selected period of time has elapsed without penalty to the customer;

ceasing to receive the first customer payment after the computer equipment is received back from the first customer;

~~purchasing the at least one component from the vendor after the computer equipment is received back from the first customer~~
ceasing to pay the vendor the periodic vendor payment in response to the cessation of the first customer payment;

selling the computer equipment to a second customer, or leasing the computer equipment to the second customer by providing the received computer equipment to the second customer and receiving a second customer payment corresponding to a length of time the computer equipment is leased by the second customer ~~while and continuing resuming to pay the vendor the periodic vendor payments to the vendor in response to selling or leasing the computer equipment to the second customer.~~

20. (Original) The method of claim 19 wherein the at least one component is a component of a personal computer and installing the at least one component includes installing the component in a personal computer, notebook computer or server.

21. (Original) The method of claim 19, further comprising ceasing to pay the vendor the periodic vendor payment for the leased at least one component during a period when the computer equipment is not leased or sold to a customer.

22-37. (Canceled)

38. (New) The method of claim 1 wherein the at least one computer component includes at least one of an input/output device, a storage device, a printed circuit board, and a processor.

39. (New) The method of claim 11 wherein the at least one component includes at least one of an input/output device, a storage device, a printed circuit board, and a processor.

40. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the at least one component includes at least one of consisting of an input/output device, a storage device, a printed circuit board, and a processor.

41. (New) The method of claim 19 wherein the at least one component includes at least one of an input/output device, a storage device, a printed circuit board, and a processor.